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## CENSUS BUREAU REPORTS ON RESIDENTIAL VACANCIES AND HOMEOWNERSHIP

National vacancy rates in the first quarter 2002 were 9.1 percent in rental housing and 1.7 percent in homeowner housing, the Department of Commerce's Census Bureau announced today. The Census Bureau said that both the rental and homeowner vacancy rates increased from the corresponding rates last year. While the homeowner vacancy rate decreased since last quarter, the rental vacancy rate did not change significantly during the same time period.

Table 1. **Rental and Homeowner Vacancy Rates for the United States: 1984 to 2002** (in percent)

	Rental vacancy rate				Homeowner vacancy rate			
Year	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
2002....	↓ 9.1				↓ 1.7			
2001....	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.8	1.5	1.8	1.9	1.8
2000....	7.9	8.0	8.2	7.8	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.6
1999....	8.2	8.1	8.2	7.9	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.6
1998....	7.7	8.0	8.2	7.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8
1997....	7.5	7.9	7.9	7.7	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.7
1996....	7.9	7.8	8.0	7.7	1.6	1.5	1.7	1.7
1995....	7.4	7.7	7.7	7.7	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.6
1994....	7.5	7.4	7.2	7.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.6
1993 <sup>r</sup> ....	7.8	7.6	7.0	6.9	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4
1993....	7.9	7.6	7.1	6.9	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4
1992....	7.4	7.7	7.3	7.1	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.5
1991....	7.5	7.3	7.6	7.3	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.6
1990....	7.5	7.0	7.2	7.2	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7
1989 <sup>r</sup> ....	7.5	7.4	7.6	7.1	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.8
1989....	7.3	7.3	7.3	6.8	1.5	1.6	1.8	1.6
1988....	8.0	7.7	7.8	7.3	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6
1987....	7.4	7.5	8.1	7.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6
1986....	6.9	7.3	7.5	7.7	1.5	1.7	1.6	1.6
1985....	6.3	6.2	6.8	6.7	1.8	1.9	1.8	1.6
1984....	5.6	5.5	6.0	6.3	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.7

<sup>r</sup>Revised.

For rental housing, the vacancy rates outside metropolitan areas (MAs), 10.0 percent, and in central cities, 9.5 percent, were higher than the rate in the suburbs, 8.4 percent, which was also the lowest rate. The 10.0 percent and the 9.5 percent figures were not significantly different from each other. The rental vacancy rates in central cities, 9.5 percent and in the suburbs, 8.4 percent, were higher than the respective rates last year, while the rate outside MAs did not change significantly.

The homeowner vacancy rate was lowest in the suburbs, 1.4 percent. Only the homeowner vacancy rate in the suburbs was higher than last year, while rates in other areas did not change significantly.

Among regions, the rental vacancy rate was highest in the South, 11.9 percent, and lowest in the Northeast, 5.8 percent. The Midwest, 10.3 percent, and the West, 7.0 percent, were higher than the corresponding rates last year, while other regions were not significantly different.

The Northeast, 1.2 percent, had the lowest homeowner vacancy rate. The homeowner vacancy rate in the Midwest, 1.8 percent, was higher than last year, while rates in other regions did not change significantly during the same time period.

**Table 2. Rental and Homeowner Vacancy Rates by Area:**  
**First Quarter 2002 and 2001 (in percent)**

Area	Rental vacancy rates				Homeowner vacancy rates			
	First Quarter 2002	First Quarter 2001	Standard error on 2002 rate	Standard error on difference	First Quarter 2002	First Quarter 2001	Standard error on 2002 rate	Standard error on difference
United States.....	9.1	8.2	0.2	0.3	1.7	1.5	(z)	0.1
Inside MAs.....	9.0	7.8	0.2	0.3	1.6	1.4	0.1	0.1
In central cities	9.5	8.3	0.3	0.4	2.0	1.9	0.1	0.2
Not in central cities (suburbs)	8.4	7.3	0.3	0.4	1.4	1.2	0.1	0.1
Outside MAs.....	10.0	10.2	0.5	0.7	1.9	2.2	0.1	0.2
Northeast.....	5.8	5.1	0.3	0.5	1.2	1.2	0.1	0.2
Midwest.....	10.3	8.9	0.4	0.6	1.8	1.5	0.1	0.2
South.....	11.9	11.3	0.3	0.5	1.9	1.9	0.1	0.1
West.....	7.0	5.8	0.3	0.4	1.5	1.3	0.1	0.2

(z) Less than 0.05.

There were an estimated 122.9 million housing units in the United States in the first quarter 2002. Approximately 108.1 million housing units were occupied; 73.3 million by owners and 34.8 million by renters. While the number of owner-occupied units increased, the number of renter-occupied units did not change significantly since last year. Of the 14.8 million vacant housing units, 11.3 million were for year-round use. Approximately 3.5 million of the year-round vacant units were for rent, 1.3 million were for sale only, and the remaining 6.5 million units were vacant for a variety of reasons.

**Table 3. Estimates of the Total Housing Inventory for the United States:  
First Quarter 2002 and 2001**  
(Estimates are in thousands and may not add to total, due to rounding)

Type	First Quarter 2002	First Quarter 2001	Standard error on 2002 Estimate	Standard error on difference	Percent of total (2002)
All housing units.....	122,885	121,148	214	315	100
Occupied.....	108,120	106,794	226	332	88
Owner.....	73,327	72,131	228	334	60
Renter.....	34,793	34,663	184	269	28
Vacant.....	14,765	14,354	128	186	12
Year-round.....	11,259	10,813	113	164	9
For rent.....	3,539	3,135	65	92	3
For sale only.....	1,253	1,141	39	55	1
Other.....	6,467	6,537	87	128	5
Seasonal.....	3,506	3,541	64	95	3

The first quarter 2002 homeownership rate, 67.8 percent, was not significantly different from the rate of 67.5 percent last year or from 68.0 percent last quarter.

Table 4. **Homeownership Rates for the United States: 1980 to 2002**  
(in percent)

Year	Homeownership Rates <sup>1</sup>			
	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
2002.....	↓ 67.8			
2001.....	67.5	67.7	68.1	68.0
2000.....	67.1	67.2	67.7	67.5
1999.....	66.7	66.6	67.0	66.9
1998.....	65.9	66.0	66.8	66.4
1997.....	65.4	65.7	66.0	65.7
1996.....	65.1	65.4	65.6	65.4
1995.....	64.2	64.7	65.0	65.1
1994.....	63.8	63.8	64.1	64.2
1993 <sup>r</sup> .....	63.7	63.9	64.2	64.2
1993.....	64.2	64.4	64.7	64.6
1992.....	64.0	63.9	64.3	64.4
1991.....	63.9	63.9	64.2	64.2
1990.....	64.0	63.7	64.0	64.1
1989 <sup>r</sup> .....	63.9	63.8	64.1	63.8
1989.....	63.9	63.9	64.0	63.8
1988.....	63.7	63.7	64.0	63.8
1987.....	63.8	63.8	64.2	64.1
1986.....	63.6	63.8	63.8	63.9
1985.....	64.1	64.1	63.9	63.5
1984.....	64.6	64.6	64.6	64.1
1983.....	64.7	64.7	64.8	64.4
1982.....	64.8	64.9	64.9	64.5
1981.....	65.6	65.3	65.6	65.2
1980.....	65.5	65.5	65.8	65.5

<sup>1</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates for the United States generally are 0.2 percent.

<sup>r</sup>Revised.

Table 4SA shows the seasonally adjusted homeownership rates for the United States from 1980 to the present. (Research has shown that seasonality for homeownership rates is present.) The seasonally adjusted homeownership rate, 67.9 percent, for the first quarter 2002, was not significantly different from the corresponding rates for last quarter or last year.

Table 4SA. **Homeownership Rates for the United States: 1980 to 2002**  
**Seasonally Adjusted** (in percent)

Year	Homeownership Rates <sup>2</sup> (Seasonally Adjusted)			
	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
2002.....	67.9			
2001.....	67.6	67.8	67.9	68.0
2000.....	67.2	67.3	67.5	67.5
1999.....	66.8	66.7	66.8	<sup>r</sup> 66.9
1998.....	66.0	66.1	66.6	66.5
1997.....	65.5	65.8	65.8	65.7
1996.....	65.2	65.4	65.4	65.4
1995.....	64.4	64.8	64.8	65.1
1994.....	64.0	63.9	63.9	64.1
1993 <sup>r</sup> .....	63.8	64.0	64.0	64.1
1993.....	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
1992.....	64.1	64.0	64.1	64.3
1991.....	64.0	64.1	64.0	64.1
1990.....	64.1	63.9	63.8	64.0
1989 <sup>r</sup> .....	64.0	63.9	63.9	63.7
1989.....	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
1988.....	63.8	63.8	63.9	63.8
1987.....	63.9	63.9	64.1	64.1
1986.....	63.7	63.8	63.7	63.9
1985.....	64.1	64.1	63.8	63.6
1984.....	64.6	64.6	64.5	64.2
1983.....	64.7	64.7	64.6	64.5
1982.....	64.8	64.9	64.7	64.6
1981.....	65.6	65.4	65.4	65.3
1980.....	65.5	65.6	65.6	65.6

<sup>2</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates for the United States generally are 0.2 percent.

(NA) Not Applicable, only the revised series for 1989 and 1993 were used in calculating the seasonality adjustment.

<sup>r</sup>Revised.

During the first quarter 2002, the homeownership rate was highest in the Midwest, 73.1 percent, and lowest in the West, 62.2 percent. None of the homeownership rates by region changed significantly from the respective rates last year or last quarter.

**Table 5. Homeownership Rates for the United States and Regions:**  
**1998 to 2002 (in percent)**

Year/Quarter	Homeownership Rates <sup>3</sup>				
	United States	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
2002					
First Quarter.....	67.8	63.9	73.1	69.9	62.2
2001					
Fourth Quarter.....	68.0	64.0	73.5	70.1	62.3
Third Quarter.....	68.1	64.1	72.9	70.1	63.1
Second Quarter.....	67.7	63.2	72.7	69.7	62.9
First Quarter.....	67.5	63.6	73.2	69.3	62.0
2000					
Fourth Quarter.....	67.5	63.2	73.1	69.8	61.6
Third Quarter.....	67.7	63.9	72.9	69.7	62.2
Second Quarter.....	67.2	63.4	72.2	69.2	61.9
First Quarter.....	67.1	63.3	72.2	69.5	61.3
1999					
Fourth Quarter.....	66.9	63.2	72.5	69.1	60.6
Third Quarter.....	67.0	63.6	72.1	69.3	60.8
Second Quarter.....	66.6	62.8	71.2	68.9	61.3
First Quarter.....	66.7	62.7	71.2	69.2	61.0
1998					
Fourth Quarter.....	66.4	62.0	71.5	69.0	60.4
Third Quarter.....	66.8	63.4	71.7	68.8	61.1
Second Quarter.....	66.0	62.7	70.3	68.4	60.3
First Quarter.....	65.9	62.4	70.6	68.2	60.1

<sup>3</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates by region generally are 0.5 percent.

The homeownership rates by age of householder ranged from 80.9 percent for the 65 years and over, to 41.0 percent for the under 35 years age group for the first quarter 2002. None of the homeownership rates for first quarter 2002 by age of householder changed significantly from the corresponding rates last year.

Table 6. **Homeownership Rates by Age of Householder: 1998 to 2002** (in percent)

Year/Quarter	Homeownership Rates <sup>4</sup>					
	United States	Under 35 years	35 to 44 years	45 to 54 years	55 to 64 years	65 years and over
2002 First Quarter.....	67.8	41.0	68.6	76.0	80.8	80.9
2001 Fourth Quarter.....	68.0	42.2	68.2	76.2	81.4	80.7
Third Quarter.....	68.1	41.6	68.6	77.1	81.6	80.3
Second Quarter....	67.7	40.8	68.1	77.2	81.5	79.7
First Quarter.....	67.5	40.4	68.1	76.5	80.8	80.7
2000 Fourth Quarter.....	67.5	41.2	68.3	76.4	80.2	80.4
Third Quarter.....	67.7	41.1	68.4	76.8	80.1	80.7
Second Quarter....	67.2	40.2	67.5	76.7	80.3	80.3
First Quarter.....	67.1	40.5	67.3	76.0	80.8	80.1
1999 Fourth Quarter.....	66.9	40.3	67.9	75.2	81.3	79.6
Third Quarter.....	67.0	40.1	67.4	76.3	80.7	80.8
Second Quarter....	66.6	39.1	66.5	76.4	80.8	80.4
First Quarter.....	66.7	39.4	67.0	76.2	81.1	79.8
1998 Fourth Quarter.....	66.4	39.6	67.6	74.9	81.7	79.2
Third Quarter.....	66.8	39.5	67.8	76.3	81.1	79.7
Second Quarter....	66.0	39.3	66.2	75.5	80.4	79.2
First Quarter.....	65.9	39.0	65.9	75.9	80.3	79.1

<sup>4</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates by age of householder generally are 0.4 percent.

The rates for racial and ethnic homeownership for the first quarter 2002 ranged from 74.3 percent for White non-Hispanic householders to 47.6 percent for Hispanic householders. The rate for Hispanic householders, 47.6 percent, was higher than 46.1 percent shown in the first quarter 2001. The rates for other racial categories remained statistically unchanged from their respective rates a year ago.

**Table 7. Homeownership Rates by Race and Ethnicity of Householder: 1998 to 2002** (in percent)

Year/Quarter	Homeownership Rates <sup>5</sup>					
	U.S. Total	White, total	White, Non-Hispanic	Black, total	Other Race, total	Hispanic <sup>6</sup> , total
2002 First Quarter.....	67.8	71.6	74.3	48.0	53.7	47.6
2001 Fourth Quarter.....	68.0	71.8	74.4	48.1	53.2	48.8
Third Quarter.....	68.1	71.9	74.6	47.5	54.4	48.1
Second Quarter.....	67.7	71.3	74.1	47.9	55.2	46.1
First Quarter.....	67.5	71.3	74.0	47.5	53.9	46.1
2000 Fourth Quarter.....	67.5	71.2	73.9	47.8	52.4	47.5
Third Quarter.....	67.7	71.5	74.3	46.8	53.9	46.7
Second Quarter.....	67.2	70.9	73.7	46.7	54.4	45.4
First Quarter.....	67.1	70.7	73.4	47.4	53.6	45.7
1999 Fourth Quarter.....	66.9	70.5	73.3	46.8	54.3	45.5
Third Quarter.....	67.0	70.7	73.5	46.6	54.5	45.5
Second Quarter.....	66.6	70.4	73.2	45.3	53.2	44.9
First Quarter.....	66.7	70.3	72.8	46.3	52.8	46.2
1998 Fourth Quarter.....	66.4	70.1	72.6	45.9	52.7	45.7
Third Quarter.....	66.8	70.4	73.1	46.6	53.6	44.9
Second Quarter.....	66.0	69.7	72.5	44.7	53.5	43.9
First Quarter.....	65.9	69.6	72.1	45.2	52.3	44.4

<sup>5</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates by race and ethnicity of householder generally are 0.2 percent for White and White non-Hispanic householders, 0.5 percent for Black householders, 1.0 percent for Other Race householders, and 0.7 percent for Hispanic householders.

<sup>6</sup>Hispanics may be of any race.



The homeownership rate for households with incomes greater than or equal to the median family income did not change significantly since last year. The rate for households with incomes less than the median family income increased from 51.6 percent to 52.3 percent, during the same time period.

**Table 8. Homeownership Rates by Family Income: 1998 to 2002** (in percent)

Homeownership Rates <sup>7</sup>			
Year/Quarter	United States	Households with family income greater than or equal to the median family income <sup>8</sup>	Households with family income less than the median family income
2002			
First Quarter.....	67.8	82.1	52.3
2001			
Fourth Quarter.....	68.0	82.2	53.0
Third Quarter.....	68.1	82.2	52.6
Second Quarter.....	67.7	82.0	51.7
First Quarter.....	67.5	81.7	51.6
2000			
Fourth Quarter.....	67.5	81.6	51.8
Third Quarter.....	67.7	81.7	52.2
Second Quarter.....	67.2	81.8	50.8
First Quarter.....	67.1	81.4	51.4
1999			
Fourth Quarter.....	66.9	81.6	51.2
Third Quarter.....	67.0	81.7	51.4
Second Quarter.....	66.6	81.5	50.8
First Quarter.....	66.7	81.1	51.2
1998			
Fourth Quarter.....	66.4	80.7	51.1
Third Quarter.....	66.8	81.6	51.1
Second Quarter.....	66.0	80.7	50.0
First Quarter.....	65.9	80.7	50.2

<sup>7</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates by family income generally are 0.3 percent.

<sup>8</sup>Based on families or primary individuals reporting income.

Note: This press release along with more detailed data are available on the Internet. Our Internet address is:  
[www.census.gov/hhes/www/hvs.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/hvs.html)

The estimates in this release are based on a sample survey and therefore are subject to both sampling and non-sampling error. Sampling error is a result of not surveying the entire population. Non-sampling error occurs because accurate information cannot always be obtained. The standard errors provided in the tables are primarily measures of sampling error.

Standard errors are used to: 1) measure the accuracy of the survey estimates, and 2) draw inferences from the survey data. For example, the standard error on the estimated rental vacancy rate of 9.1 percent is 0.2 percentage points. Consequently, the 90-percent confidence interval as shown by these data is from 8.8 percent to 9.4 percent; i.e., the interval  $9.1 \pm (1.6 \times 0.2)$  percentage points. Thus, one can say with about 90-percent confidence that the average rental vacancy rate derived from all possible samples is included in this confidence interval. Statements about differences are made only when the 90-percent confidence interval on the estimated difference does not include zero.